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SONGS
OF
MANY SEASONS.

BY
JEMMETT BROWNE.

ILLUSTRATED BY
G. DU MAURIER, WALTER CRANE, C. W. MORGAN, &c.



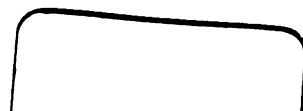
London:
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PEWTRESS & CO., 15, GREAT QUEEN ST., LINCOLN'S INN FIELD.
1876.

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280 . L . 226.



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SONGS OF MANY SEASONS.



A GAME AT CHESS. (Page 23.)

1944

CONFIDENTIAL

THE NEW YORK TIMES

THE NEW YORK TIMES

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1

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The Holy Field,* where rested the departed,
Was changed into a garden full of blooms,
And many a one whose breast with grief had smarted
Now wandered cheerfully amongst the tombs.

Oh, blessed use ! thus happily renewing
The memory of the dead from year to year,
Whilst *we* forget them, or their loss are rueing,
Without one flower to catch a falling tear !

One grave alone I found which was forgotten ;
No loving hand had placed a chaplet there ;
The stone was rent, the wooden cross was rotten,
And weeds unchecked were growing everywhere.

The lichens, sown by many a season rainy,
Had well nigh all the graven words effaced.
“ A mia Giulia amata bene,”
After a while upon the stone I traced.

* Campo Santo.

Was she a wife, a mistress, or a daughter ?
Did lover, spouse, or mother raise this stone ?
The love they bore her, had it ebbed like water,
And left her stranded loveless and alone ?

Or by her loss were their lives wholly blighted,
So that they could not live without her love ?
And had death kindly both again united
To love each other in a world above ?

Poor lady, though upon this All Souls' morning
No well-known hand with flowers thy grave will dress,
A stranger now shall care for its adorning,
To-day no one shall call it flowerless.

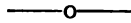
I ran and fetched a wealth of autumn roses
And handfuls of the salvia's scarlet plumes,
And scattered them where Giulia reposes
Until the grave was buried deep in blooms.

Is it a foolish thought that she may meet me
Up in a happier world than this of ours,
And with the one who loved her come and greet me,
And thank the stranger for his autumn flowers?





THE TWO ANGELS.



At eve I climbed a belfry tower,
Which rose above an ancient town,
And heard the clappers chime the hour,
As giddy I looked down.

I watched the busy throng below,
Dwarfed by the height—a pigmy race—
For ever moving to and fro,
About the market place.

And musing on man's littleness,
When measured by the Infinite,
They seemed to grow still less and less,
Till they were lost to sight.

Deep wrapt in thought I lingered on,
Not marking how the time went by,
And waking, found the crowd had gone
And stars were in the sky.

I felt a strange mysterious awe
Thrill through me—not unmixed with fear—
And lifting up my eyes I saw
Two Angels standing near.

They stood upon the parapet,
And all around the air was bright.
The wings of one were black as jet,
The other's snowy white.

The angel with the wings of black
Seemed sorrowful and full of woe,
As from a quiver at her back
She filled an ebon bow.

And ever and anon she shot
An aimless arrow to the night ;
And wailing rose from every spot
On which they chanced to light.

The other scattered poppy flowers,
And sleep compelling hellebore,
And mortals hailed the welcome showers,
And stretched their hands for more.

And as they pressed them to their eyes,
The poor forgot their sore distress,
The sorrowful their miseries,
The worn their weariness.

And though I wondered who they were,
These sister Angels, what their task ;
My tongue was tied, for very fear
I did not dare to ask.

But as with bated breath I stood,
A sad sweet voice fell on my ear,
“ Ah ! Sister Sleep, it is not good
For me to linger here.”

The black-winged Angel whispered low,
“ I envy thee thy happy hours,
And fain would lay aside my bow
And take instead thy flowers.

“ I know that mortals hate me sore,
And say that I their treasures snatch :
They tremble if I pass the door,
Shriek if I lift the latch.

“ Whilst thou art hailed by low and great,
By young, and old—a welcome boon—
They think thou ever com'st too late,
And leavest all too soon.

“ I must away! near thee I brood
Upon the wretched lot I fill;
And wish like thou to work them good
Instead of working ill.”

“ Dost thou,” the white-winged said, “ repine?
Thy lot was fixed for thee in love—
A nobler task below than mine—
A higher place above!

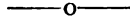
“ Ah! Sister Death, it is not true:
Thou workest them more good than I;
They would not dread thee, if they knew
How good it is to die!

“ They are too blind to see thy worth,
That richer gifts by thee are given ;
I only give them rest on earth,
Thou givest rest in heaven ! ”





KUNEGUNDA.



THE crescent moon is sailing through the ether
Convoyed by fleets of stars upon her way :
Whilst wrapt in slumber deep the earth beneath her
Is sleeping off the fever of the day.

No sound is heard upon the lakeside—only
The lazy water lapping midst the weeds,
And night winds with a murmur sad and lonely
Sighing soft music through the border reeds.



But hark ! what is that sudden strain that swelleth
So soft and low upon the midnight air ?
The voice seems full of tears, and sweetly telleth
Of love unspeakable, and love's despair.

“ As an angel thou art fair,
Kunegunda,
And the meshes of thy hair
Round me weave a golden snare,
Kunegunda.

“ And the glory of thine eyes,
Kunegunda,
Like a glamour on me lies,
And my heart within me dies,
Kunegunda.

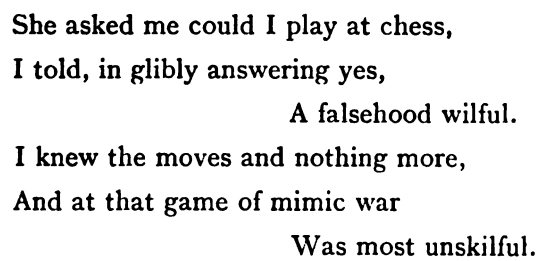
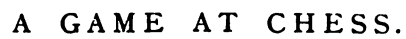
“ Thou art high exceedingly,
Kunegunda,
I am poor, of no degree,
Only rich in loving thee,
Kunegunda.”

The singer little knows midst yonder myrtles
That there are list'ners to the song he weaves :
He does not see the flow of women's kirtles ;
The gems like fire-flies flashing through the leaves.

He sees not her who parts the leaves asunder,
And listens with soft rapture-speaking eyes :
It is the maiden-queen, fair Kunegunda,
Who tries to catch the words, but vainly tries.

" I fain would know the purport of his singing :
My maidens, wait for me a little space ! "
And like a wild roe o'er the daisies springing
She gained unmarked the minstrel's resting-place.

" Thou my boldness ne'er can'st blame,
Kunegunda,
Never wilt thou know my flame,
None shall hear me breathe thy name,
Kunegunda.



Then why upon a game so bent ?
Because I think chess tournament
Is love's dominion.
No game secures a tête-à-tête
So cozily—at any rate,
That's my opinion !

I fetched the chess men and with care
I placed our seats behind the chair
Of Ethel's Auntie.
Not that she would have watched the board,
For soon the dear old lady snored
A soft *andante*.

The troops I marshalled for the fight.
I placed them wrong—she set them right
 With silver laughter.
We fiercely met with weapons drawn
Thirsting for blood—she moved a pawn
 And I one after.

Her hazel eyes so soft and true
Her generals were—they pierced me through
 And held me captured
With fetters forged of sunny hair—
More than content such chains to bear,
 Rejoiced, enraptured !

Her fingers were her officers :
Ten rosebuds, that had won their spurs
 In chess-board battle.
Her red lips were her bugle-men ;
How could I think of tactics, when
 They chose to prattle ?

I played an idiotic game.
“ You move,” she said, “ without an aim !
 You’re very stupid !”
Her chess men stood in full array,
Whilst mine had melted all away
 Betrayed by Cupid.

Beside her lay my knights and castles,
My bishops, queen, and all her vassals :

My king was fated.

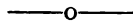
“ Ethel,” I cried, “ I won’t be checked
Unless you say you don’t object

To both being mated.”





C A U G H T .



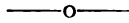
Robin always chose the heather,
Where the mountain breezes blow ;
When we used to roam together,
Not so very long ago.
Now he seems to care no longer
For the breezes on the hill,
But each day his love grows stronger
For the valley by the mill.

Now he gathers briar roses,
 But to throw them in the brook ;
Or pretends to read, and dozes
 In some hazel-shaded nook.
Now across the foot-bridge railing
 Lazily he whips the stream,
Whistling to the trout and grayling,
 Half awake, and half a-dream.

But it is at Moreton water
 That he oftenest throws his fly,
And I think the miller's daughter
 Guesses well the reason why.
Her sweet eyes, I need not ask it,
 All this sudden change have wrought ;
Empty lies the fishing basket,
 It is Robin who is caught.



TO A TEA CUP.



DEAR little tea cup ;
Oh ! my rare wee cup,
Work of Celestials, you must be divine !
Tea no one drank in
Porcelain of Nankin
So fit to rank in
Richer ceramic collections than mine !

These curious blue marks—
Not sham, but true marks—
Prove you are nearly five centuries old.
In your young beauty
Perhaps you did brew tea
For the King Chuty,
Robed, like the sun, in a mantle of gold.

Or a memento,
Perhaps you were sent to
One of his ladies, with almond-shaped eyes ;
Beauty's own model,
So swathed in swaddle,
She could just toddle
On her feet dwarfed to an infantine size.

Tell me, how is it
Your tints exquisite
Still are as fresh as a cycle ago ?
Time, mortal's true ill,
Has not served you ill ;
His fingers cruel
Never have marked you with scratch or with blow.

Where is the crowned head
Whose fame resounded
Wherever tea-blossoms scented the air ?
He, the Sun's brother
By a Moon mother ;
He, not another :
Where is he? Echo, the cynic, says " Where ?"

Where is his charmer ?
Who would dare harm her,
She who ruled over the ruler of men ?
But in the places
Which knew her graces
She left no traces.
They have forgotten their fair denizen.

She was not brittle,
Frail perhaps a little.
Why is she missing, and you here to-day ?
Say by what token
You are unbroken ?
Patent to no ken
Is the distinction, for both are of clay.

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Come, tell me. Speak up !
Dear little tea cup,
What is it places you mortals above ?
You have no heart or
Body to barter !
Are not a martyr
To that disease which we mortals call love !





CASTLE HERZSTEIN.

1

2

3



CASTLE HERZSTEIN.

—o—

PERCHED upon a peak of basalt,
Grimly Castle Herzstein stands ;
And the country folks will have it,
'Twas not built by mortal hands.
Well they ask how human fingers
Could pile up such masonry,
Block on block, until the turrets
Seem to creep into the sky.

Foes have never sacked the castle,
Many bold and brave have tried ;
And the Herzsteins ruled as tyrants
In the insolence of pride.
But at last high heaven has listened
To the cry of the oppressed :
Buried lies the last Count Herzstein,
And the people hope for rest.

Now a lady owns the castle,
Dainty, young, and passing fair,
Very like a pictured angel—
Melting eyes and sun-bright hair ;
Every beauty is united
In the Lady Gisla's face ;
Every word is full of music,
Every movement full of grace.

Who would think that eyes so tender
 Never glistened with a tear ?
That the heart in that soft bosom
 Never knew the name of fear ?
Yet 'tis so ; that shy demeanour,
 Those sweet looks are only lies ;
'Neath the gentle garb of woman
 Lurks a demon in disguise.

Scores on scores of high-born suitors
 Seek to win her tiny hand :
But to all she coyly answers,
 " If you love me or my land
Bring your charger to my castle,
 Mount, and round my ramparts ride,
And, when you have made the circuit,
 Come and claim me for your bride."

Very narrow is the pathway,
Very deep is the abyss,
And there is no wall or railing
'Twixt it and the precipice :
At the first slip horse and rider
Tumble from the dizzy height,
Till their bodies reach the valley,
Mangled, crushed, a ghastly sight !

When a knight starts on the journey,
To a turret straight she hies,
And looks down with pleasure dancing
In her bright demoniac eyes ;
There she watches for a stumble,
With her red lips ripe to mock,
Screams with glee when horse and rider
Fall, and dash from rock to rock.

Many high and gallant suitors
Thus have ridden to their doom,
Down below their bones are bleaching,
Grass and reeds their only tomb.
What to her are two more victims—
One more rider, one more horse?
And the grass down in the valley
Richer grows for every corse!

But at last there comes a suitor,
Far more gallant than them all,
Of the lady asks permission
To ride round her castle wall.
For the first time Lady Gisla
Feels love stirring at her heart,
And would give her lands and castle
Not to let her suitor start.

He has started, and the lady
Watches him with bated breath ;
“ Never was there horse so steady ! ”
Whispers she as pale as death.
“ Will he make the journey safely ?
Yes ! he will—the first ! the last !
He is safe,” she cries with rapture,
“ All the danger now is past ! ”

Quick she flies to bid him welcome,
Offers him her lily hand,
And proclaims him lord and master
Of her heart and of her land.
Then she leads him to her bower,
Gives him there a burning kiss,
And declares, with heaving bosom,
She is his and only his.

They are wedded in the chapel,
Where the marble Herzsteins sleep ;
In his eyes a strange fire flashes,
Love has taught her eyes to weep.
As they issue from the portal
Shouts of greeting fill the air.
“ Was there ever braver bridegroom ?
Was there ever bride so fair ? ”

Suddenly a death-like pallor
Kills the blushes of the bride
When she sees her palfrey waiting,
To the chapel doorway tied.
“ Why is this ? ” she asks her bridegroom,
With the wan ghost of a smile.
“ Will you take me from my castle ?
Let us stay a little while ! ”

“ Mount ! Before you lies a journey,
Very well you know the way,
I and many more have trod it ;
I am here, but where are they ?
I had once a well-loved brother,
Now he rots beneath your walls,
There he lies, unshrived, unburied,
Loud his blood for vengeance calls.”

“ Spare your prayers ! They do not move me !
At your tears I only scoff !
Let me lift you on your palfrey,
He is pawing to be off !”
And the people, fickle ever,
Echoed every word he spake—
“ Let her take the self-same journey
She has made her lovers take.”

“ Give me space,” she pleaded, weeping,
“ Sorrow for the past to tell,
Just to make my peace with heaven ;
Just to bid thee, love, farewell !
Love hath shown me I am guilty,
But love came, alas, too late !
Had I seen and loved thee sooner,
I had met a happier fate.

“ I was bred by heartless tyrants—
Taught, like them, to thirst for blood,
Till the woman was unwomaned,
Evil took the place of good.
None to love, and none to love me,
Childhood left me motherless ;
Love for thee has changed my nature ;
Kill me, still thy name I'll bless.”

Then he looked on her with pity,
And of pity love was born,
Whilst he thought with bitter trouble
Of the oath that he had sworn—
That, if he should make the journey,
She should take the self-same ride—
And he gazed with love and sorrow
On his sweet repentant bride.

Suddenly his features brightened,
Lost their pale and ashy hue.
“Take the palfrey, bring my charger !
Lady, I will ride with you !
I must see you take the journey,
For I cannot break my oath ;
Safely has my good horse borne me,
He will safely carry both.”

Safely round the charger bore them,
She lay fainting in his arms,
And he looked with love past telling
On the lady's countless charms.
Then she raised her eyes and whispered,
“ Love, with thee I could have died,
Now I live, thou mayest love me ;
Love my soul has purified.”





A M I D S U M M E R D A N C E.

—o—

THE lads and the lasses from homestead and chalet
To a chesnut-girt meadow have wended their way ;
They have come from the lake-side, the alp, and the valley,
To dance through the hours of a midsummer day.

The fiddlers play briskly, and briskly the dancers
Keep time to the music with light twinkling feet ;
And words whispered softly bring still softer answers,
As hands are pressed gently, and eyes shyly meet.

Round the thyme-scented meadow the elders are sitting,
 Whilst the little folk joyously play at their knees,
And they gossip and laugh as the dancers keep flitting
 In and out of the shade of the old chesnut trees.

Apart from the gay groups, deserted and lonely,
 An old woman sits and looks on the gay scene ;
She watches the dancers, but with her eyes only,
 Her thoughts are far off from the dance on the green.

She thinks of the days when her feet were the lightest
 That brushed off the dew from the flower-spangled grass ;
That her lips were the ripest, her eyes were the brightest,
 There were many to tell her, as well as her glass !

She thinks of the young men who fought for her favour,
 Who ran at her bidding, and came at her call :
She gave them a word, or a smile, and they gave her
 Their heart's honest love, but she laughed at them all.

She thinks of the one whom at last she had chosen,
The truest and noblest of all she had known ;
Who had melted her heart, so cold and so frozen,
And warmed it with love, till it glowed like his own.

And where were the maidens who danced at her wedding ?
The young men who trolled out their merriest staves ?
All gone like the rest ! and their children are treading
The sweet summer flowers, that bloom over their graves.

Where too were her children (the crown of her losses),
Who one by one lovingly hung at her breast,
Then faded away ? Now she thinks of the crosses
Which mark in God's acre the spots where they rest.

Down her care-furrowed cheeks the hot tears slowly trickle,
As she thinks of her old age without any prop,
Death has had a rich harvest ! she wishes his sickle
Had cut her down too, with the rest of the crop.

Worn out with her walk, and her thoughts so heartrending,
Her hands drop down listlessly into her lap ;
With eyes slowly closing and head forward bending,
The old woman falls quietly into a nap.

But oh ! what a change has come over her features,
A smile round her lips is beginning to play,
From the saddest she turns to the happiest of creatures,
And the sunbeams have kissed all the tear-drops away.

She dreams by her loved ones that she is surrounded,
And tenderly whispers each well-beloved name,
Her voice seems as if from a distance it sounded,
'Tis the old woman's voice, and yet 'tis not the same.

The dancers give in, though they're loth to surrender,
For stars in the sky are beginning to peep ;
The laughter is loud, and the partings are tender,
But still the old woman smiles on in her sleep.

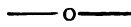
So old and so weary ! we must not forsake her,
Let us see her home safely," a kind maiden said,
" How happy she looks, 'tis a shame to awake her."
She had gone home already ! the old dame was dead !

Death had dealt with her kindly ; whilst peacefully sleeping
She had passed from this sorrowful world to that place,
Where the dwellers know nothing of parting and weeping.
Was it strange then she died with a smile on her face ?





A L A M E N T .



THEY told me with hushed voices I must bear her
Far to the sunshine of a Southern shore ;
That I must make no tarrying, but tear her
From home and all that she had loved before ;
That though the rose was sweet and never fairer,
A canker worm was nestling at the core.

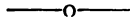
I called them fools, and bid them cease their prating,
And pointed to her soft cheeks' brilliant hue,
The while half doubting, tremblingly debating
If their ill-bodings might perchance be true.
And then I panted for a clime elating,
Where health revives, and pulses beat anew.

We left dull England—and her eyes' bright lustre
Waxed brighter still beneath Italian skies.
“ This is not Death ! ” she said, and bid me trust her,
And with her smiles she wiled away my sighs.
But violets in many a purple cluster
Soon blossomed on the grave, where now she lies.

The happy days of spring-time are returning,
With love and laughter on the scented breeze,
And buds are bursting, and young nestlings learning
To plume their new fledged wings and leave the trees.
But joy is not for me, my heart is yearning
For her I loved, and lost beyond the seas.



A FLOWER WITHOUT A NAME.



I WANDERED in a garden where the flowers
 Made happy contrasts undesigned by art ;
And there I passed the sunny summer hours,
 Unwilling from their beauty to depart.
And whilst the fragrance round me I was drinking,
In very idleness I fell a-thinking
 That I would pluck and wear one near my heart.

Silent I stood in sweet embarrassment,
Where all were fair, not knowing which to choose,
Whether to take one for the richest scent
Or for its perfect form or brilliant hues.
But when I marked the universal sweetness,
Of every flower the wonderful completeness,
I longed to gather all—not one to lose.

That could not be—I had not arms to hold
A tithe of all the flowers which round me grew ;
But from the wealth of beauty manifold
Could I not gather for myself a few ?
“ Not so,” my heart said, “ I have room to cherish
One flower alone ; the rest would only perish ;
But to that one I would be ever true.”

A full-blown rose with perfume filled the air.
“ Take me,” she whispered, “ take me to your arms.
I am a queen, and fairest of the fair ;
Gaze on my beauty, contemplate my charms ! ”
I thought her dazzling beauty marred by boldness,
And from her words of love I turned with coldness,
For boldness chills me more than beauty warms.

Close by a lily reared her stately head,
 Arrayed in shining white, like some fair bride.
" 'Tis not my beauty that I vaunt," she said,
 " My spotless purity is my sole pride."
But on I passed not heeding her sweet savour,
For purity alone with me finds favour
 Which, self-unconscious, loves her head to hide.

A poppy wooed me with her sleepy breath
 And ripe red lips, with passion all a-fire.
I knew her love would end in worse than death,
 Although she said that it would never tire.
I turned and fled from her, for without mercy
She would have dragged me down, the wanton Circe,
 And left me wallowing swine-like in the mire.

And as I paced the garden to and fro
 So many flowers smiled at me as I passed,
It seemed to me that I should never know
 Which one would be my fate to wear at last.
When wandering in the garden's farthest limit,
Out where the gardener had not cared to trim it,
 A cloud of perfume o'er my path was cast.

It was a perfume very strange and sweet :

At first I could not tell from whence it came,
But when I searched the green leaves at my feet

I found a hidden flower unknown to fame.

There was not one in all the garden fairer,
None half so sweet. Happy would be the wearer
Of such a flower, although it had no name !

“ This is the flower,” I cried, “ that I would place

Close to my heart to cherish like a child.”

The little flower looked up into my face,

As if it wished to come to me, and smiled.

It seemed to whisper, “ When your heart is aching,

And weariful the journey you are taking,

The way shall by my fragrance be beguiled.”

I plucked and near my heart I laid the flower,

Handling it gently with a soft caress,

To share my griefs and joys. Oh! happy hour

That gave me such a boon my life to bless!

Bearing its fragrance with me then I started

Upon my way, light-footed and light-hearted,

And wandered out into the wilderness.

The desert was no longer bleak and bare :
The stones no longer cut my stumbling feet ;
The path was soft and deep with flowers fair,
And cooling breezes modified the heat.
That sweet flower o'er my life had thrown a glamour,
And yesterday's debate and angry clamour
Had vanished in a peace profound and sweet.

And thus I dreamed that it would ever be,
That life would pass like some long summer day.
Ever more sweetly smiled my flower on me,
As nestling closer to my heart it lay,
When suddenly the stroke of rustling pinions
Fell on my ear—'Twas one of Heaven's bright minions !
I felt he came to take my flower away.

“ That flower,” he said, “ cannot with you remain,
The seed was dropt from Paradise to earth,
And I am sent to bear it back again
To Heaven, the place which should have seen its birth,
And plant it in those regions high and holy
In gardens sweet with amaranth and moly.
On earth they did not know the flower's worth.”

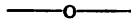
“ I know its worth,” I cried, “ if you must take
My flower, take me ; we cannot separate.
If you leave me behind, my heart will break.
Kind Angel, do not leave me desolate.
Oh ! leave me with my flower a little longer,
To learn the way to Heaven—till I am stronger
And fitter than I am to pray and wait.”

It could not be, the angel said ; my flower
Could not be left to blossom longer here :
The order had gone forth. He had no power
To alter it. And then my heart to cheer,
He bid me keep my eyes on Heaven above me,
Where my sweet flower would never cease to love me
Till I should find it in that brighter sphere.

And I am left alone—alone to cope
With wayside dangers, weariness and pain,
To bear my burden, living on the hope
The angel left my spirit to sustain,
That after many stumbles and much striving
Upon the plains of Heaven at last arriving
My flower shall be restored to me again.



A LAST REQUEST.



I WOULD not have you in black raiment clad,
Rather your softest, brightest colours don ;
If I am happy, why should you be sad
When I am gone ?

You must not let your eyes be red with weeping,
You must not let your cheeks be pale and wan :
Remember I am only sweetly sleeping,
When I am gone.

Think of me only as a happy spirit,
Freed from the flesh, but to be clothed upon.
Live that you may the same bright life inherit,
When I am gone.

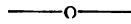
Forget my many failings in my love,
A love that I shall carry with me yon,
A love that will be purified above,
When I am gone.

Raise me no tomb engraved with empty praises
Which every passer-by may idly con,
But lay me down to rest beneath the daisies,
When I am gone.

And let my memory be ever green,
Green as the grass above me, and anon
We all shall gather in that home serene,
Where I am gone.



THE WANDERER.



Across the bleak and treeless wold
The North wind drove the blinding sleet,
And over path, and field, and fold
The snow lay like a winding sheet.
Oh! bitter was the night, and biting cold!

Oh! bitter was the winter night!
A night to make the poorest home
Unwontedly seem warm and bright!
A night when none would care to roam
And leave the hearth, flushed with the red fire light.

The shepherd piled the logs of wood
Till all the cottage was a-glow ;
And round the blazing chimney stood
Five chubby children in a row
Watching their mother warm their evening food.

The fire had burnt each ruddy face,
When by their smoking porridge bowls
They at the table took their place
And clamoured, hungry little souls,
Until their father came and said the grace.

With horny hands clasped on his breast
The shepherd raised his eyes to heaven
And prayed " Kind Saviour be our guest,
" And may the food that Thou hast given
" To us, though most unworthy, now be blest."

“ If He should come,” the youngest cried,
“ I’d give Him some of my nice bread.”
“ I’d ask Him to sit by my side,”
A large-eyed little maiden said,
“ I’d give Him up my bed, if He’d abide.”

One set for Him an empty chair,
Another fetched a bowl and spoon,
And all bestowed what they could spare
Until the bowl was brimming soon.
The guest would have by far the largest share.

Their father from a word forebore,
Fearing to mar their infant zeal :
Their mother looked upon the floor
A smile of pleasure to conceal.
When some one knocked—knocked at the cottage door !

A knock ! and silence deep as death !
No sound except the ticking clock !
And whilst they startled held their breath
There came another feeble knock !
“ 'Tis Jesus,” whispered little Lizabeth.

The shepherd rose, and from the thatch
Took down the key with eager hand,
Unlocked the door, and raised the latch,
And hurriedly the traveller scanned,
Then bid him enter in with all despatch.

The stranger was way-worn and old,
The blood had left his wrinkled cheek,
His teeth were chattering with the cold,
His frozen tongue refused to speak,
And down his clothes the melting snow-flakes rolled.

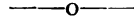
They led him to the blazing fire,
They dried his dripping cloak and hat,
And from his shoes they scraped the mire
Whilst in the chimney seat he sat
And warmed and feasted to his heart's desire.

"It can't be He, so old and thin,"
The eldest to his father said,
"Look at his hair and shrivelled skin!"
The shepherd answered "You have read
'I was a stranger and ye took me in.'"

"Your meaning, father dear, I see,"
The boy said climbing on his knees,
"In every stranger He may be,
'For as ye did it unto these,'
Our Lord will say, 'ye did it unto me.'"



THE PILGRIM'S POSSESSIONS.



Pilgrim.—"TELL me, stranger, tell to me
Whose is yonder verdant lea
Covered o'er with sheep and kine?
Never, stranger, have I seen
Fairer cattle, grass so green."

Prince.—"Pilgrim, fields and flocks are mine."

Pilgrim.—"Tell me whose yon castle walls
Where the summer sunshine falls,
Girt about with oak and pine?
Princely banners from them float,
High the ramparts, wide the moat."

Prince.—"Yonder castle too is mine."

Pilgrim.—"Whose that river sweeping fast
Pleasant meads and islands past,
Like a snake which seems to twine?
Washing on its devious way
Towns and hamlets—whose are they?"

Prince.—"Town and river both are mine."

Pilgrim.—"Whose are yonder purple hills
Down whose side the dancing rills
Like bright threads of silver shine?
Whose those noble forest glades
With their deep and peaceful shades?"

Prince.—"Pilgrim, all you see is mine."

Then the Pilgrim raised his eye
Proudly to the summer sky,
“ Richer property is mine !
Far above yon welkin blue
It is hid from mortal view.
Canst thou also call it thine ? ”





THE GOLDSMITH AND HIS DAUGHTER.

FLORENCE, A.D. 1400.

—O—

“ I fain’ would have thy portrait, daughter mine,
To hang beside thy mother’s on the wall !
In thy sweet face I see full many a line

“ Which once I loved in her’s ; and most of all
Those dark-lashed eyes, and hair of ruddy gold,
Her image o’er the gulf of years recall.

“ But thou art fashioned in a stronger mould,
 My Beatrice! Thy form is round with health,
The leaping life-blood pulses uncontrolled

“ Through thy young veins, and lavishes a wealth
 Of bloom upon thy cheeks ; thy mother's were
As white as marble, colouring by stealth :

“ And yet thy roses are not half so fair
 As her wan lilies : they are Mary's flower,
And so our Lady plucked my lily rare,

“ And gave thee, Rosebud, in my darkest hour
 To blossom by my solitary hearth,
And turn my wilderness into a bower.

“ I who have watched, and loved thee from thy birth
 Now see thee in thy perfect womanhood,
And dread lest some one else should learn thy worth,

“ And in thy love stand first where I have stood :
Then rob me of thy presence, that his heart
May dance for joy, whilst I am left to brood

“ On what we were, before he made us part.
I cannot keep the sunshine of thy face
For ever, and must call the painter's art

“ To catch for me a shadow of thy grace,
That I may fancy in my lonely room
Thou art within the reach of my embrace,

“ As oft I think thy mother in the gloom
Of twilight comes down from the wall to kiss
My furrowed cheek, bringing a strange perfume

“ Of Indian cinnamon and ambergris,
With which her clothes were scented in the chest.
But, child, I make thee sad with talk like this.

“ Come, lay thy golden head upon my breast,
And let us talk of things which better suit
A maiden's fancies. How wilt thou be dressed ?

“ How pose thyself ? Say, wilt thou touch thy lute
To show thy taper fingers rich with rings ?
Wilt thou take Dian's bow ? or crowned with fruit

“ Wilt play Pomona ? I will lend thee strings
Of Orient pearls to hang about thy neck,
And thou may'st choose from all the precious things

“ Which fill my mart—gems without flaw or speck
To dim their lustre—coral, filagree,
All that thy fancy covets, take to deck

“ Thy robe, until it shimmers like a sea
Which laughs with sunshine. I shall never find
A painter worthy of my gems and thee ! ”

“ Ah ! Padre mio, thou wast ever blind
 To my shortcomings,” whispered Beatrice,
As round her father’s neck her arms she twined.

“ And dost thou think that I would sacrifice
 A love that I have tried from earliest youth
To some new love, which may be fire or ice,

“ Or both, and neither long ? Not I, forsooth !
 I’ll keep the love I know, until I die.
I will not leave thee. I will be thy Ruth,

“ And, father, thou shalt be my Naomi.
 If Boaz chance to find me out some day,
And ask me for his wife, I will reply,

“ ‘ I do not leave my father. Perhaps you may
 ‘ Take your abode with us ; we’ve room for three.
But if you like it not, then, go away.’

“ I am not jesting, Babbo, though you see
 A smile upon my lips at my own wit.
You won't believe me? Then I'll swear to thee

“ By my sweet patron saint I will not quit,
 Whate'er I be, or wedded wife or maid,
My dear old home, and all I love in it,

“ Whilst thou wilt keep me. Art now still afraid
 That I shall leave thee? Thou hast heard my oath,
Which I will keep, with Saint Cecilia's aid ;

“ And we will live together, happy both
 Each in the other's love, till death us part.
But, father, if some day I plight my troth

“ To one not all unworthy, thy great heart
 And house will give him just a little place,
And he shall help thee in the goldsmith's mart ;

“ And in thy favour he will grow apace
Till thou canst truly call him thy dear son,
And let him share a father's fond embrace.

“ A maiden's fancies take the bit and run,
And thou wilt think that I have in my mind
A husband. No! Believe me, there is none

“ Of whom I dream. No image lurks behind
The veil of words. I would not dare conceal
A thought from thee, who hast been ever kind ;

“ Too kind to me, thy wayward child, I feel.
But tell me, Babbo, who shall paint
My portrait? Friars only seem to deal

“ With paint and brushes : they can draw a saint,
But not a woman. Fra Angelico
Paints choirs of angels, very sweet and quaint,

“ Who harp upon their harps and trumpets blow ;
 He could not paint a lady with her lute.
I will not have a shaven friar ! No !

“ My limner must be layman—one to boot
 Who knows the world, and has a merry tongue
To untie mine, for I must not sit mute,

“ If you would have my true expression flung
 Upon the canvas. Know you such a man ?
Remember, padre mio, I am young ;

“ And giddy youth loves laughter better than
 A saint’s long face, which knows not how to smile.
Kiss me, dear father ! I’ll upstairs and scan

“ My wardrobe, and talk with my nurse the while
 On female vanities. Mariuccia is
A clever counsellor. She knows the style

“ Which suits me better than myself, I wis.

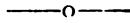
Leave it to us ! My robe, you shall confess,
Is worthy of your jewels. One more kiss.

Go, choose the painter, whilst I choose the dress.”





A CHRISTMAS ROSE.



I MET her first in Piccadilly,
One winter morning, raw and chilly,
I well remember.
She seemed to me a summer rose
Left by mistake amid the snows
Of late December.

Summer was shining in her eyes,
Her cheeks were bright with exercise,
Her lips like cherries.
The falling snow in crystals flecked
Her dress, and cloak, and bonnet decked
With crimson berries.

Her hair, the hue of molten gold,
Around her head was simply rolled—
Hair soft and shiny.
I marked, too, as she lifted high
Her dress, to keep her flounces dry,
Her feet were tiny.

And round her there was something rare—
A virginal and modest air,
A moral halo,
Which touched my heart. “God bless that face
And keep it pure by His good grace.”
I stopped to pray low.

Next morning, too, again we met,
Both splashing through the slush and wet,
Near Hyde Park Corner.
I thought the maiden fairer still,
And wished I had a painter's skill
And could have drawn her.

Thence every day, in sun and shower,
I passed her at the self-same hour
And longed to stop her ;
But there was something in her eye
That would not brook a liberty :
She looked so proper !

As east or west of Apsley Gate
She passed, 'twas early or 'twas late ;
A sweet timekeeper !
Thus winter blossomed into May
Without one word ; yet every day
My love grew deeper.

One morning as the maid drew nigh,
I took my watch instinctively
 Out of my pocket.
She blushed, and smiled, and blushed again,
And looked at hers : hung from the chain
 I spied a locket !

A locket ! Given, perhaps, by a lover !
My heart would break should I discover
 She had a sweetheart.
“ The time,” I said ; “ the time has come ;
I must speak out, I can’t be dumb.
 Come, do not beat, heart ! ”

That night, to find the freshest flowers,
I paced the streets for two good hours,
 Although it pelted.
I dropt next morning at her feet
A rose ; she picked it up—the sweet,
 Smiled, blushed, and smelt it.

Next day grown bolder, blushing red,
I stopt her, " Rosebud fair," I said,
 " Accept another ! "
She raised my rosebud to her nose,
And her blush roses with my rose
 Essayed to smother.

She thanked me, said the day was warm ;
I thought the sky looked like a storm,
 Suggested thunder.
" Could we not meet here, if we tried
A little earlier ? " She replied,
 " I should not wonder."

Next morning earlier than our wont
We met, shook hands, and she said " Don't,
 You hurt my fingers ! "
I open mine to let them go—
Poor little injured hand—but no !
 It fondly lingers.

The Park was sweet with soft May balm
As we two wandered arm in arm,
Both happy—*rather !*
My jealousy evoked a laugh,
The locket held a photograph
Of her blind father.

She told me that she served a shop
For ladies' bonnets, quite tip top,
And all such matters.
I laughed, and said, if she'd a mind
To come to Bond Street, she would find
Me at a hatter's.

The time soon came for us to part,
When each remembered, with a start,
Next day was Sunday.
A day of meeting would be missed !
How could such friends as we exist
Apart till Monday ?

In difficulty, woman's wit
Will find a way, when man with it
Declines to grapple.
So whilst I stood disconsolate,
By four short words she set all straight,
“ I go to chapel ! ”

Next morning, at the chapel door,
I waited half-an-hour or more
Lest I should miss her.
At last I spied her in the street,
She looked so wonderously sweet,
I longed to kiss her.

The blind man's arm within her's lay ;
She beckoned me to keep away,
But I defied her.
I followed closely to their pew,
And stealthily I squeezed in too,
And sat beside her.

Although I had my book of prayer
I much preferred her book to share,
 It was so pleasant
To touch her little hand by chance
And interchange a furtive glance,
 Seen by none present.

Not as attentive as I ought,
I turned the leaves ; a sudden thought
 Became embodied.
I through the marriage service ran
And pointed, " Wilt thou have this man ? "
 She blushed, and nodded.

Oh, joy ! a bandage seemed unswathed
From off my eyes—and they were bathed
 With magic sight-wash.
The ugly barn-like chapel shone
A temple fit for Solomon,
 With gold for whitewash.

The hymns, roared out a tone too flat
By boys and girls so melting that
 I longed to fan them,
Now seemed deliciously to swell,
As if from Heaven the music fell,
 An angel anthem !

When I came out, the summer sun
Shone brighter—I had wooed and won
 My rosebud beauty.
I felt a man—a hero—yes !
Through me there'd be one spinster less !
 I'd done my duty !

I dared not speak to her that day,
So from the chapel turned away,
 A happy sinner.
I strolled into the Park—and what
Was most unusual, quite forgot
 My Sunday dinner !

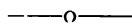
To bring my story to a close
Cupid was kind, although he chose
My heart for target:
For in the merry month of June
He joined us—and our honeymoon
Was spent at Margate.

And now we keep on Brompton Road
A shop—with Magasin de Modes
Gold lettered on it.
So if such things you wish to buy
Come see my rosebud—and then try
A hat or bonnet.





MARGUERITE.



ALONE amidst a garden's fragrant mazes
A maiden strays, herself the fairest flower ;
Careless she stoops, and plucks some bright-eyed daisies
To try her fate, and wile away the hour.
" He loves me," whispers she, as in her fingers
She takes a petal, and then lets it fall—
" Loves me a little—madly "—here she lingers,
But sighs with the last petal, " Not at all—
He loves me not at all ! "



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MARGUERITE.



“ Ah, cruel daisy ! hopeless thus to leave me,”

She cries, and treads the stalk beneath her feet ;
She takes another : “ Does my heart deceive me ?

Then, daisy, leave me to the sweet deceit !
He loves me—loves a little—loves me madly ! ”

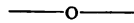
Like flakes of snow the petals softly fall,
Till one alone remains ; then very sadly
She plucks the petal, sobbing, “ Not at all—
He loves me not at all ! ”

Weep not, poor maiden ! though thy life be lonely,
Soon happier days may be for thee in store ;
Try one more daisy, one more daisy only,
The answer may be kinder—weep no more.

“ He loves me ; ” and the tear-drops almost blind her,
As with her tears the tiny petals fall,
“ He loves thee ! ” cries a well-known voice behind her—
“ He loves thee madly—loves thee all in all !
He loves thee all in all ! ”



THE MORALS OF MAYFAIR.



THEY say that English girls are free :

It is not true ; for I was sold

For gems, a coronet, and gold.

What call you that but slavery ?

My mother set on me a price,

And led me forth to Fashion's mart,

Where I unwitting played my part,

And tricked myself for sacrifice.

My pathway seemed a path of flowers,
My life one long delirious waltz :
I little dreamed this world was false,
This doubly-lying world of ours !

That truth and honour went for naught,
That rank and riches were sublime,
And poverty a crying crime,—
These were the morals I was taught !

A poor man asked me for his bride ;
My mother laughed at me, and said
That she would rather see me dead.
O God, that I had only died !

And then an empty lordling came,
Who told me that my face was fair,
And offered me his gems to wear,
And with his gems his titled name.

I took the bait, the gilded lie,
A tailor's puppet of fine cloth ;
I trampled on the russet moth,
And chose the painted butterfly.

O, cruel tongue that said him " nay ! "
O, cruel heart that did not beat
With rapture when, in accents sweet,
He told his love ! Ah, well-a-day !

Ah, well-a-day ! And now too late
I've learned to love that honest heart,
And hate the man that made us part—
A lifelong love ! a lifelong hate !





COUNT RIOL'S REPENTANCE.

—o—

“SHRIVE me? no! thou doating greybeard!

Shrive me? no! a thousand times!

What care I for absolution,

I, who glory in my crimes?

Dost thou know that I am Riol,

Riol of the bloody hand—

And that murder, rape, and rapine

Track my footsteps through the land?”

“ Well I know thy name, Count Riol ;
Well thy deeds are known to me.
But though few have been such sinners,
I will shrive thee—even thee !
Penance do, and show repentance
For the past—thou shalt be shriven,
And shalt surely leave my presence
All forgotten—all forgiven.”


“ Curse repentance ! ” jeered Count Riol,
“ If the penance were but light,
’Twould be sport to cheat the Devil—
Cheat the Devil of his right.”
“ See, Sir Count,” the Hermit answered,
“ Nothing simpler could I ask ;
Fill this empty gourd with water—
Swearing to complete the task.”

On his knightly word he promised,
Hied him to the Hermit's well,
Stooped to fill the gourd with water,
As he stooped the water fell.
With his scarf he lowered his helmet,
But the water fled the boss,
Leaving not one drop of moisture
Twinkling on the crevice moss.

In the distance gushed a fountain
Sparkling in the noonday sun ;
But when Riol reached the margin,
Suddenly it ceased to run :
And the waters seemed to mock him—
Mock him with a tinkling laugh,
As they vanished o'er the meadows,
Trailing like a lady's scarf.

Riol, cursing, climbed a mountain,
After him his horse he led,
Thence he spied a distant river
Dwindled to a silver thread.
Eve and night he madly galloped,
Reached it at the break of day ;
But whene'er he stooped for water,
Still the water sped away.

Onward yet Count Riol journeyed,
Passing over many lands,
Till at last his worn-out charger
Dropt upon the hard sea sands.
Riol leapt from off his saddle,
Ran the whispering waves to meet,
But like frightened dogs they cowered,
Turned and fled before his feet.



Then Count Riol, vowing vengeance,
Journeyed back o'er hill and dell,
Till he reached the rugged mountain,
Where was hung the Hermit's cell.
There he found the old man praying—
Praying on his bended knee,
And he heard his own name, Riol,
Muttered very tenderly.

“Keep thy prayers for those who ask them,”
And he smote him as he knelt.
“Lord forgive him,” prayed the Hermit,
Every blow that Riol dealt ;
Nor did Riol cease from smiting
Till the old man ceased to live,
Praying with the last death rattle,
“Lord, forgive as I forgive.”

For the first time Riol shuddered—
 Shuddered at the sight of gore,
As he looked upon his victim
 Stretched in death upon the floor.
For the first time Riol's bosom
 Heaved with deep repentant sighs.
For the first time tears of sorrow
 Shivered in his down-cast eyes.

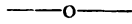
On his knees he fell, and trembling
 Took the dead man's hand in his,
Closed his eyes, and weeping sorely
 Pressed upon his brow a kiss.
And the gourd hung from his girdle,
 Caught a tear before it fell,
Brimmed and bubbled o'er with water,
 Which from blood-stains washed the cell.

On the water flowed unceasing,
Filled the well to brimming o'er,
Set the dried-up fountain running,
Fuller, clearer, than before.
And the virtue of that tear-drop,
Which Count Riol's soul aneled,
Is not spent, for by those waters
Men now find their bodies healed.





RONDINELLA PELEGRINA.



STAY, feathered pilgrim, stay your flight,
Stay for one moment, pilgrim swallow,
Here on my window sill alight ;
I have no wings your course to follow,
And I must speak to you to-night.

To-night :—you may be far away
Before the sun is up to-morrow.
I would not wait for break of day
If only I your wings could borrow !
But here it is my fate to stay,—

Far from the land that gave me birth,
And lapped me in my childhood's hours,
A land where heaven embraces earth
Till she is all a-blush with flowers,
A land of music and of mirth.


Here in this pale and tuneless North
I miss the vintage songs and dances,
I miss the warmth in love and wrath
Which fills our folk-lore and romances—
I miss the sun which calls it forth.

I miss the sky of cloudless blue,
The melting purple of the mountains,
The haze that veils the distant view,
The murmur of the wayside fountains,
The groups around them, ever new.

I miss the sea without a tide,
The balmy airs which softly fan it,
The vines upon the mountain-side,
The orange, olive, and pomegranate,
Which clothe the champaign far and wide.

I miss the ruined tombs and towers,
The palaces of ancient story,
Now buried in a grave of flowers,
Although they tell of vanished glory,
And days when all the world was ours.

But most of all I miss a face,
Sweet as a Raphael Madonna's,
Which smiled on me with tender grace,
Before I dreamed of wealth and honours
And started in the weary race.



A gleam of sunshine ! just a gleam !
Enough to form a happy presage,
Of warmer suns to make me dream !
Kind swallow, take for me a message,
And love alone shall be the theme.

Ah ! that means yes ! that twitter tweet !
I'm sad of heart and very lonely,
But I will promise not to greet,
If, swallow, you will promise only
To take a message to my sweet.

Come, rest and listen, kindly heart,
Whilst I my message short am telling—
But first I must lay down the chart
To steer you to my darling's dwelling :
Come rest awhile before you start.

Seek first the sea shore where the cliffs
Rise white and steep, crowned by a fanal.
The west wind blows with gentle whiffs
And soon will waft you o'er the channel ;
Your wings will beat the fishing skiffs.

Fly over fertile Picardy—
Where whispering poplars weave a network
Round well-tilled fields, till you descry
In flat Alsatia's plain the fretwork
Of Strasburg spire against the sky.

Steer south by east, you cannot err,
Steer by the sun's course, like a seaman,
Over the Jura, sweet with fir,
Down to the smiling shores of Leman ;
There wet your wings, and onward whirr.

Fear not, although before you lie
The mighty Alps—a frozen barrier—
Whose summits creep into the sky,
Your wings are strong, my message carrier ;
Fear not, but bravely upward fly.

Light not upon the glittering snow
If you would pass that ice-bound region ;
Wait till you see the sunshine glow
Upon the marble angel legion
Which watch o'er Milan plain below.

Fly onward o'er the ripening vines,
Make for the mountains in the distance,
Rest there amongst the whispering pines ;
You, who have braved the Alps' resistance,
Will laugh to scorn the Apennines.

Once over them, your eyes will fall
On shining domes and campaniles
Surrounded by an ancient wall—
'Tis Florence, City of the Lilies,
Italia's fairest coronal.

Stay not, kind pilgrim, to salute
The seat by Dante made immortal,
Nor stop to peck the sculptured fruit
Which clusters round Ghiberti's portal;
Think of the exile and his suit.

Perch on the Bell-tower and survey
The circling country—rich with tillage,
Look for a hill, with villas gay,
Crowned by a convent and a village;
Fly to thy goal—Fiesole.

Fiesole! that name excels
All names for musical completeness,
And like the sound of silver bells
It fills the ear with rhythmic sweetness,
Fiesole! 'Tis there she dwells.

You'll find her cottage by the pine
Which shadows it from roof to basement :
Her window by the grapes which twine
And hang in clusters round the casement.
Oh! would I were that happy vine!

Fly thither; perch upon the sill
And twitter, swallow, sweetly to her,
Till she appear and ask your will;
Then tell her you are come to woo her,
For one who loved, and loves her still.

You need not doubt she is my queen ;
 There are no eyes in all creation
So luminously dark, I ween,
 No lips so full of animation,
No brow so noble and serene.

Tell her my love has known no change,
 Though angry waters roll between us,
And jealous mountains range on range
 Rise up and from each other screen us ;
They cannot two true hearts estrange.

Tell her I know she will remain
 True to her plight ; I do not doubt her.
Others will woo her, but in vain,
 She knows I could not live without her :
We two can never now be twain.

Tell her that in the theatre

The crowds of English rank and fashion

Whilst I am singing never stir ;

They say my voice is sweet with passion,

They do not know I sing to her.

I sing to her, whate'er the plot,

Whether her name be Margarita,

Amina, Lucia, matters not,

My voice is always tenfold sweeter

When I have all but her forgot.

My heart and thoughts then wing away

Across the gas and sea of faces,

And I with her in fancy stray,

Waking with song in well-loved places

The echoes of Fiesole.

But when my song is at an end,
My dream is vanished by the thunder
From countless hands, and shouts that rend
The perfumed air. I start in wonder,
And hand on heart, my head I bend.

They bid me every song repeat,
I sing to gain their good opinion,
For gold drops from the hands that beat,
And I must spoil this rich dominion
To lay a fortune at her feet.

Tell her that I have made a name,
Tell her that fortune's smiles are certain,
I now can laugh at critics' blame
And jealousies behind the curtain.
It is too late to mar my fame.

Tell her as soon as I am back,
I'll choose with her the wedding raiment,
In costliness it shall not lack,
A song or two will find the payment
For creamy lace and silken sack.

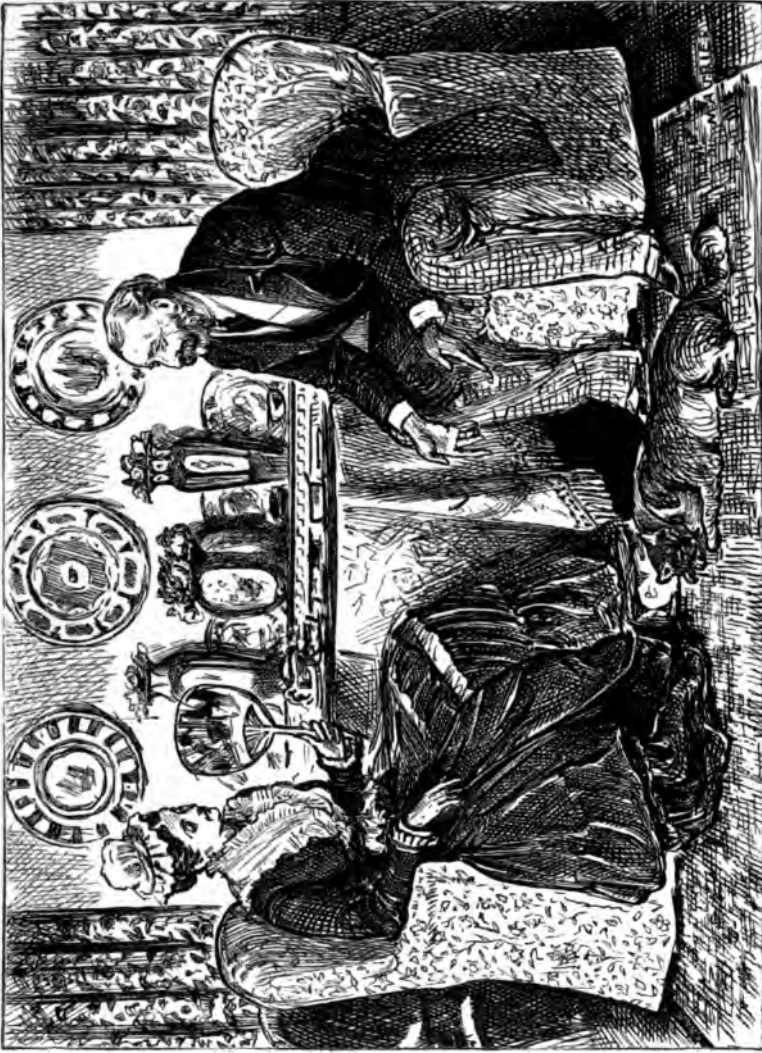
And you may tell her, if you will,
That I have grown so rich and reckless
That I have taxed the goldsmith's skill
To fashion for her neck a necklace,
Which will not suit my darling ill.

Tell her all this, and tell her too,
Her beating heart I shall to mine press
Before the leaves have changed their hue ;
Before the grapes are in the wine-press,
Dear swallow, I shall follow you.

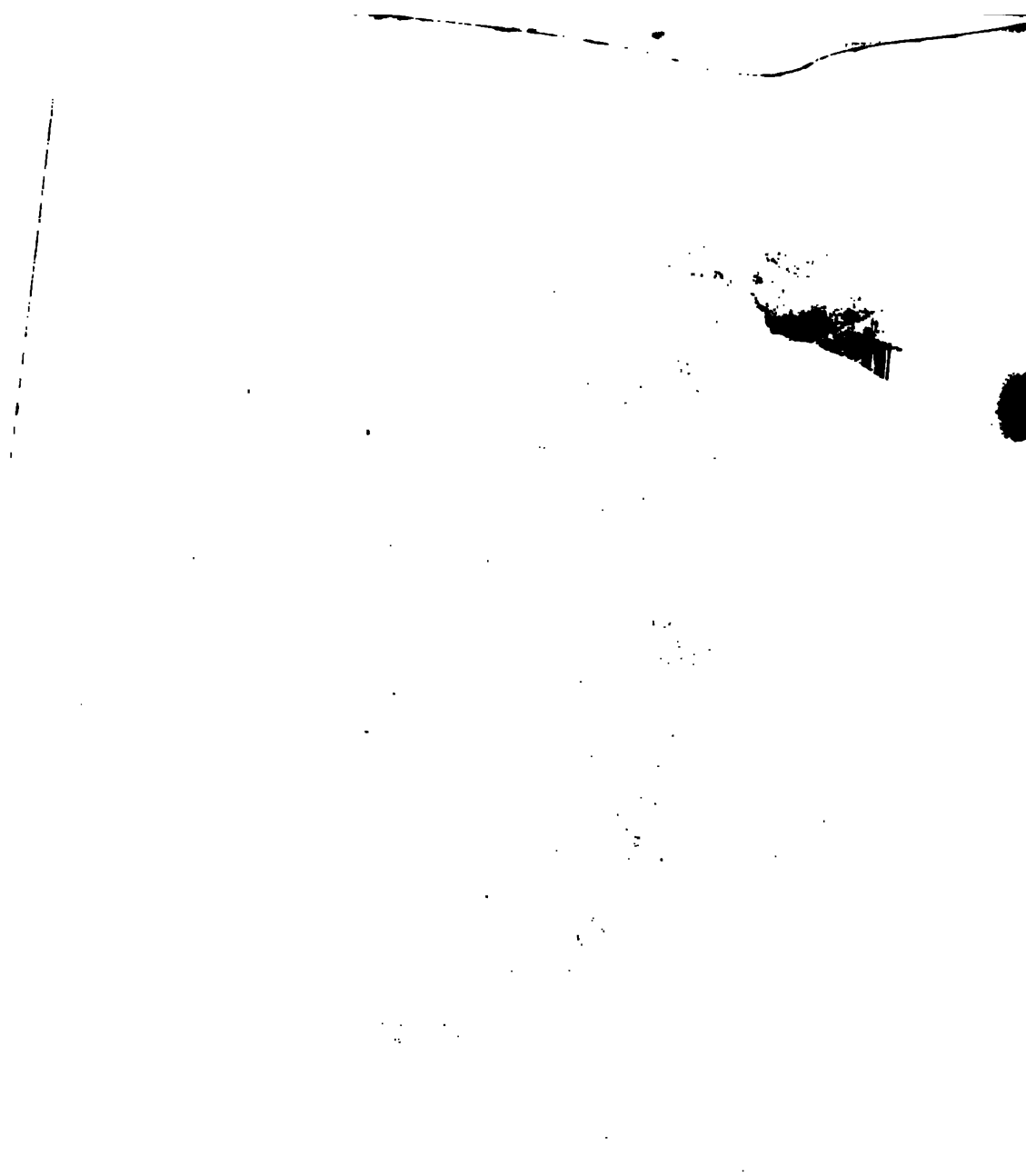
Before you start, lift up your beak,
And let me fill it full of kisses,
Drop none upon the mountains bleak
Or in the glacier's blue abysses,
But bear them safely to her cheek.

Oh ! bear them safely, pilgrim bird,
And when you've given her up your burden,
And told her all that you have heard,
You may claim back by way of guerdon
A kiss from her for every word.

Your time for flight may not be nigh,
Yet with such bliss before you looming,
You will not wait, but southwards fly !
Ah ! now your feathers you are pluming,
You're off ! you're off ! good luck ! good bye !

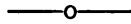


CHINA *versus* CHIPPENDALE.





CHINA VERSUS CHIPPENDALE.



MISS MYRTLE.

“ Come, Mr. Rose, you’ll rouse my ire,
Unless you say that you admire
 This cup and saucer.
It’s Bristol china ; Champion’s work.
Champion, you know, the friend of Burke,
 Whom you adore, Sir

“ That is an old Bow shepherdess.
This Chelsea vase, you must confess,
 Has few to beat it
For colour, form, and perfect taste.
Just feel the softness of the paste !
 I'd like to eat it ! ”

MR. ROSE.

“ You really must be (don't be cross)
An ostrich or rhinoceros,
 If without pepsine
You can digest your crockery.
Come, bite a little bit, and try !
 Ah ! prudence steps in ! ”

MISS MYRTLE.

“ Whenever you drop in to tea,
You're always poking fun at me,
 And at my hobby.
I won't return your vulgar chaff,
But seriously, I always laugh
 Once in your lobby.

“ I tumble over hideous chairs,
And ugly tables, rounds and squares ;
(I am outspoken.)
You say my china’s apt to break ;
Excuse the liberty I take,
Your things are broken.”

MR. ROSE.

"Come, we won't quarrel, but agree,
Than our collections there can be
None other finer.
It might be awkward at a sale
If both went in for Chippendale,
Or both for China."

MISS MYRTLE.

“ You’ve chairs and tables for a mansion !
Your house will surely need expansion,
Unless you thin them.
You well might spare a dozen sets !
Pray, what’s the use of cabinets
With nothing in them ?”

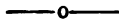
MR. ROSE.

“ Look, dear Miss Myrtle, how your cat,
Loves my old dog (who equals that
 of Mother Hubbard's.)
Why should such friends as we four part ?
Combine collections ! fill my heart,
 And empty cupboards ! ”





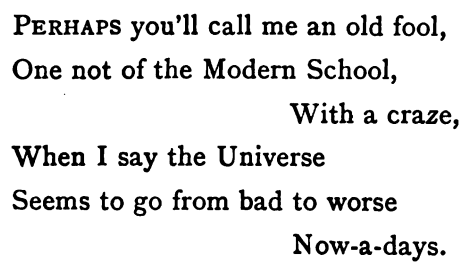
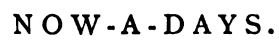
ONE, TWO, THREE.



I know a shady bower,
A sweet secluded nook,
Where many a bright-eyed flower
Bends down to kiss the brook.
My path lies down a hollow,
Where rippling waters run ;
I hope no one will follow,
There's only room for one.

But if a bonny maiden
 (Whose name I dare not tell)
Should, with wild flowers laden,
 Draw near my bosky dell,
I, in a voice caressing,
 Would tell, and tell her true,
That with a little pressing
 There might be room for two.

I'd crown her with wild roses,
 I'd throne her on the green,
And whilst she there reposes
 I'd kneel before my queen.
Should any one perceive us,
 In this we'd both agree,
We'd tell them to believe us
 There was not room for three.



Married men once loved their wives,
Loved them dearly as their lives,
 To their praise.
But the numberless divorces
Prove they take to other courses
 Now-a-days.

Married women used to be
Models of propriety
 In their ways.
But they cut their dresses low
Willing all they dare to show
 Now-a-days.

Women then did not admit
Double entendre in their wit ;
 Now it pays.
Conversation is not gay,
If it be not *hazardée*,
 Now-a-days.

Young men used to love a dance,
Never letting slip a chance :
 Curious phase !
If they deign to grace a ball,
'Tis not *chic* to dance at all
 Now-a-days.

Men went in for early marriage :
Wives could do without a carriage.
 Rumour says,
On their backs girls fortunes carry ;
So the men decline to marry
 Now-a-days.

Maidens then were innocent,
Blushing at a compliment,
 Or a gaze.
But a blush a vanished grace is,
For young ladies paint their faces
 Now-a-days.

Black their eyelids, till they stare;
Wash with soda, till their hair
Looks like maize.
'Tis the fashion to be blonde
A la mode du demi-monde
Now-a-days.

Wealth had not a golden key
To unlock society.

Money sways
High and low ; and cotton-spinners
Welcome nobles to their dinners
Now-a-days.

Rank so friendly now with trade is,
Bill discounters titled ladies
Stoop to raise.
Manners used to make the man,
It is only money can
Now-a-days.

Have I not now proved my case
That the world grows worse apace ?
Who gainsays ?
If you doubt me, perhaps you are
Innocent—most singular
Now-a-days !





WOMAN'S VICTORY.



AUTUMN comes without its dances
Round the wine-press on the hill ;
Through the vine-boughs armour glances,
And the trumpet soundeth shrill :
Fiercely wages war between
Guelph and kindred Ghibeline.

Archers on the castle towers,
Armed with arbelast and bow,
Hurl their darts in deadly showers
On the enemy below :
And the siegers are not slack
Fifty-fold to hurl them back.

Few the garrison, and fewer
Grow their numbers day by day ;
Yet their hearts are braver, truer,
As their numbers ebb away :
Every archer fights for ten,
And the women fight like men.

But though they are brave as ever,
They must needs give in at last ;
For, where man could enter never,
Famine has already past :
Famine, far a deadlier foe
Than the Ghibeline below.

“ Hah ! they fail,” cries Conrad roundly,
“ Arms and strength alike are lost ;
And they soon shall pay right soundly
For the trouble they have cost :
Not one soul shall live to tell
How they fought, and fought so well.

“ Rue it shall this proud Pretender !
Ho there ! Trumpets sound a truce ;
Heralds, bid them to surrender,
Listen to no vain excuse :
If they hesitate or doubt,
Tell them we will smoke them out.

“ Tarry, for a moment tarry :
Say their women may go free ;
And that each with her may carry
Her most precious property :
Conrad’s word is pledged that they
Shall go scathless on their way.”

Quick the heralds did their mission,
 Standing at the gate without ;
Nor long waited the decision,
 For all cried with one great shout :
“ If our women are to live,
 Gladly we our lives will give.

“ Let but one short hour be given,
 One short hour before we die ;
Just to make our peace with Heaven,
 Just to wish our wives good-bye :
We will then throw wide the gates,
And march out to meet our fates.”

In the fortress all are kneeling,
 All within the camp is still ;
While St. Killian's bells come stealing
 Through the vineyards up the hill :
And the Neckar murmurs on
Mournfully past Heiligbronn.

Women—weeping, moaning, shrieking—
Gather round the castle gate,
While the draw-bridge beams are creaking,
And the chains clank with the weight :
“ Hold thee ! ” cries a maiden, “ hold !
I can save you, young and old.

“ What the count has freely offered
From the heralds we have heard ;
Why not take what he has proffered ?
Why not take him at his word ?
Let us carry through the host
What we prize and value most !

“ What so dear as fathers, brothers ?
What so dear as husbands, sons ?
Come then, sisters, wives, and mothers,
Carry out your precious ones :
Wilhelm ! I can carry thee,
Weak and hungry though I be.

“ Think not of the heavy burden,
Think not we are feeble-kneed ;
Only think how great the guerdon
If we (and we shall) succeed ! ”
For a moment all was still,
Then a shout arose, “ We will.”

The portcullis, now ascending,
Blocks the gateway up no more ;
And beneath their burdens bending,
O'er the bridge the women pour :
While, to keep their spirits calm,
Soft and low they chant a psalm.

They are hailed with shouts of laughter,
As they totter down the road ;
Ribald troopers follow after,
Jeering at their novel load :
But the love that maketh strong
Bears them gallantly along.

Conrad hears the shouts with wonder,
Quick his charger he bestrides ;
Scattering the crowd asunder,
Straight into the midst he rides :
And his wrathful eyes descry
The strange troop which passes by.

"Hell-hounds !" cries he, hoarse with passion,
"This is not a time to jest ;
Think you that in this strange fashion
Ye will quell my anger best ?
Know ye not my word is passed,
That this hour shall be your last ?"

"Ah, too well," replies the maiden,
"But your word is pledged likewise ;
That we women may pass laden—
Laden with what most we prize :
Thus we pray : nay, claim of thee,
With our burdens to go free."

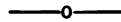
See ! his face grows kind and tender,
In his eye a tear shines bright !
“ Women ! ” cries he, “ I surrender,
Ye have won a bloodless fight :
Won a victory, in sooth,
With no arms but love and truth.

“ These men surely would have perished
Had you been less fond and true ;
Take the lives so dearly cherished,
Faithful women ! as your due :
And as now our fight is o'er,
Let us all be friends once more.”

Deep in prayer the Guelphs are kneeling,
And the Ghibelines are still ;
While St. Killian's bells come pealing
Through the vineyards up the hill :
And the Neckar dances on
Joyously through Heiligbronn.




THE HUNTER.



Down from the mountains,
Down through the snow,
Cometh a Hunter,
At even-glow.
“Would there were some one,
Some one,” he sighs,
“Waiting to greet me
With love-lit eyes.

“ But the one maiden
For whom I yearn,
In her great beauty
My love would spurn.
No longer lonely
My life would be,
If I thought only
My love loved me.”

Up at her window,
Sings a fair maid,
Watching the mountains
Blush into shade ;
“ Play silver moonbeams,
Play round his path,
Shine stars, and light him
Safe to his hearth.



“ Would I might cheer him
 Back from the chase,
But in his love-thoughts
 I have no place ;
No longer lonely
 My life would be,
If I thought only
 My love loved me.”

Hark ! 'tis the Hunter's
 Horn in the street ;
In the bright moonlight
 Their glances meet :
In that one moment
 Eyes have revealed
All the sweet secret
 Lips have kept sealed.

Hunter and maiden
Hie to their rest,
One thought of rapture
Filling each breast ;
“ No longer lonely
My life will be,
Now I know only
My love loves me.”





WHEN THE LILACS WERE IN FLOWER.

—o—

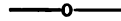
ON the boughs the birds were mating,
I was mateless, I alone,
After weary years of waiting,
With a heart as hard as stone :
Suddenly the blood came leaping
Through my veins with new-born power,
Love awoke, so long in sleeping,
When the lilacs were in flower.

Years have passed, and still impassioned
At my heart the old love stirs,
And my wife has deftly fashioned
All my ways to blend with her's.
Spring's return I hail with pleasure,
For it brings to mind the hour,
When I wooed and won my treasure,
And the lilacs were in flower.





F O R S A K E N .



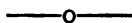
THERE was sunshine on the sea,
There was sunshine in my breast,
When he told his love to me
And I all my love confessed.
On the sand my name he traced,
But the ripples in their play
Up the shore each other chased,
Till they washed my name away.

There was sunshine on the heather,
There was sunshine in my heart,
As we talked of days together,
Days when we no more should part.
On the turf my name he printed,
Printed it with flowers gay ;
But a breeze, when evening glinted,
Rose and swept my name away.

Oh ! had I but marked the warning
Of the zephyr and the sea,
I had not in tears been mourning
O'er a lover's perfidy.
Now I wander, lost, forsaken,
Night has blotted out my day,
For my love with him has taken,
Light and life, and name away.



A MEETING.



Two friends, who have not met since school-boy days,
Stand on the English sea-shore hand-in-hand :
The summer sunshine on their faces plays,
And gilds the waves that break upon the sand.
On memory's chart with lightning speed they track
Their course along the years since last they met ;
Few are the white-stone days they would wish back,
But numberless the days they would forget.

One sees the earth dressed in her rosiest hue,
A world of flowers, and rich with ripening corn :
He sees a cloudless sky serenely blue,
A sun which dances as on Easter morn.
The yellow sand spreads him a golden floor,
The white cliffs rise up like a silver wall ;
The waves run laughing up the sunny shore,
The sea-mew's cry is almost musical.

The other sees the sun all blurred and dim,
He sees no beauty in the earth or sky ;
There is no laughter of the waves for him,
He only hears them murmur, moan and sigh.
The sea-bird shrieks, the sand strikes damp and chill,
Weeds choke the barley on the southern slopes ;
The solemn cliffs below the castle-hill
Are troops of ghosts—the ghosts of buried hopes.

“ Friend, wish me joy ! ” one cries, “ my feet
Are standing once again on English soil ;
This very night I shall my loved ones greet,
And in their arms forget past years of toil.”
“ God bless you,”—and the other grasps his hand,
“ Forgive the weakness of these tears, which blind
My eyes—but I am leaving Fatherland
And everything I love on earth behind.”







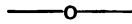


THE RIVER.





THE RIVER.



MORNING paints the hills with blushes
As the vapours upward fly,
Through the vale a river rushes,
Stealing roses from the sky.
Where the bank is white with daisies
Trips a little maid along,
Smiling on the stream she gazes
And breaks out in joyous song :
“ Merry river, laughing river !
You and I were made for play :
We will both dance on for ever,
Laughing river, dance away ! ”

Now the summer sun has mounted

To his noontide resting place ;

And the smiles cannot be counted

On the river's beaming face.

In the glorious midday splendour

Lies a youth beside the stream,

And with eyes and voice love-tender,

Sweetly sings he half a-dream :

“ River, we, in mystic fashion,

Both are filled with heaven above ;

River, strong as human passion ;

River, deep as early love ! ”

Evening shadows now are darkling

Over hill and over dale ;

And the river, erst so sparkling,

Hurries onward, cold and pale.

By the stream an old man wanders,

Wanders weary, weak, alone,

On his staff he leans and ponders,

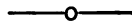
Murmuring in a monotone :

“ River, strange, mysterious river,
Whence art thy cold waters flowing ?
On thy brink I stand and shiver,
River, whither art thou going ? ”





LADY ASHFORD'S BALL.



THE light falls softly from the crystal lustres,
Which hang like meteors in the gilded rooms,
Where rare exotics, heaped in rainbow clusters,
Woodyed by the heat, breathe forth their strange perfumes.
Foot-stirring strains of music rise and fall,
And all is gay at Lady Ashford's Ball.

The women, decked in richest silks and laces,
Vie with each other to be loveliest ;
The men you see around have world-known faces,
And carry stars and orders at the breast.
The army, navy, bar, and senate—all
Have met to honour Lady Ashford's Ball.

They smile and gossip as they watch the dancers—
A living bouquet, a kaleidoscope—
Now struggling through the figures of the Lancers,
Now whirling in the waltz or gay galope :
And hearts that never bowed to beauty's thrall
Are captives made at Lady Ashford's Ball.

Here are the choicest types of England's daughters,
Blue eyes and brown eyes, black and golden hair.
Our fairest flowers, transplanted from all quarters,
To bloom awhile in London's smoky air ;
But Lily Norton is pronounced by all
The belle of belles at Lady Ashford's Ball.

Her beauty is beyond the pen of poet,
Her eyes are changeful as the ocean's blue,
Her dark hair, with a dash of sunshine thro' it,
Would baffle anyone to name its hue ;
As graceful as an aspen, slender, tall,
She moves, the queen of Lady Ashford's Ball.

The young men for a dance would fain secure her ;
The old men strive to win a passing smile :
To both she seems an angel ; nothing purer
The heart of young or old could well beguile.
To few can she give dances, but to all
She gives her smiles at Lady Ashford's Ball.

One says her head reminds him of the Clytie,
Another of some rare antique at Rome,
Another likens her to Aphrodite,
Her white dress surging round her like sea foam,
As whirling in the dance her footsteps fall
As light as flowers at Lady Ashford's Ball.

It is the prelude to the "Wiener kinder ;"
A partner claims her for her favourite waltz,
And off they fly ; nought seems their course to hinder,
Till suddenly as pale as death she halts.
"My heart !" she cries, "hold me, or I shall fall."
And tenderly he bears her from the Ball.

They chafe her hands, sprinkle her face with water,
Like dewdrops on her flowers the water lies,
Her mother comes and calls upon her daughter
To speak one word, to open her closed eyes.
Alas ! Poor mother ! 'Tis in vain you call,
You will not wake the Beauty of the Ball.

Some of the dancers ask what is the matter—
But only those who happen to be by.
The orchestra strikes up the "Morgen blatter,"
And few there are who wait for a reply.
"Some one has fainted from the heat, that's all."
And on they waltz at Lady Ashford's Ball.

And now the early summer daylight dawning,
Steals pale and blue into the heated rooms ;
And those who do not wish the summer morning
To point out faded flowers and ruffled plumes
Are waiting in the cloak room and the hall,
Till they can drive from Lady Ashford's Ball.

The self-same light of early morn is creeping
In at a chamber window. By the bed
A mother, with a heart too crushed for weeping,
Kneels gazing at her daughter cold and dead—
Dressed in the same gay robe, the same rich shawl
That she had worn at Lady Ashford's Ball.

The guests at last have gone. The lights have faded
Before the sunshine of the morning hours.
The hostess and her daughters, pale and jaded,
Are left alone amidst the hot-house flowers,
And as to bed with weary steps they crawl
They all agree it was a splendid Ball.

“Miss Norton’s death has robbed me of all pleasure :

How sad, Mamma, so young and fair to die !”

Grace was the youngest, and the world’s cold pressure

Had not had time her heart to petrify.

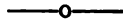
“Yes,” said her mother, with a sleepy drawl,

“How very sad !—It might have spoilt our Ball !”





MA BELLE LAIDE.



THEY say there is no beauty in her features,
And ask me what I see in them so fair,
To me she is the fairest of God's creatures,
I tell them that is all I know or care.
May be there are no lines to tempt a painter
To steal them for a simpering virgin's face—
Lines which when gazed upon grow faint and fainter,
And vanish in a mist of spurious grace.

Her features may be faulty, disunited,
But blend into one grand harmonious whole.
They have not seen her when her eyes are lighted
With love : they have not gazed into her soul
As I have gazed, and marked a mystic glory
Transform her face, till I could fancy mine
That sweet creation of the Latian story,
Egeria of the fountain, nymph divine.

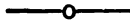
I ask them why it is that round her centre
The wit and talent of each gay saloon,
And why that wheresoever she may enter
All beauty pales, as stars before the moon.
They say her gems are load-stones to all gazes,
Her costly raiment. Look at her to-night !
Her ornaments are only meadow daisies,
Her dress a simple robe of spotless white.

Enough, enough ! I know my wrath is idle !
'Tis jealousy alone which points the gibe,
And soon the bells which carol for our bridal
Will sound a knell to all the envious tribe.
I know that I have won a peerless treasure,
The beauty of whose soul can never fade,
Blest, too, with earthly beauty beyond measure,
They, even they have called her *la belle laide* !





A DEESIDE SONG.



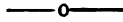
We rested on a mossy stone,
Upon the banks of bonny Dee,
And she and I were all alone,
And she was all the world to me.
I waited for one short sweet word,
Her hand in mine and mine in her's,
I waited, but no sound I heard
Except the whispering of the firs.

"Wilt thou be mine?" I asked again,
 "Wilt thou be mine no more to part?"
The maid could not her tears restrain
 Nor hush the beating of her heart.
These signs I marked with joyfulness;
 They were her heart's interpreters,
And soon I heard a soft low "yes,"
 'Twas not the whispering of the firs!





THE NAIAD AND THE DRYAD.



NAIAD.

I WOULD rather be a Naiad
 Than a Dryad ;
One of Ocean's merry daughters,
 Born and cradled in the foam,
 With a home
Fathoms deep below the waters.

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DRYAD.

I would rather be a Dryad
 Than a Naiad,
Dwelling in some twilight grove,
 Where the nightingale and linnet
 Deep within it,
Warble forth their tales of love.

NAIAD.

There is ceaseless change and motion
 On the ocean,
Which is lacking on the earth.
 Season upon season follows,
 And the swallows
Come and go,—but where's our mirth?

DRYAD.

Who would choose a restless billow
 For a pillow
If he wished for rest or sleep?
 Naught a grassy bank surpasses,
 Where the grass is
Sweet with flowers, and soft, and deep.

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NAIAD.

Where's the mirth of sea-tossed gambols,
And of rambles
In and out of azure caves,
Plucking flowers which never wither
Hither, thither;
At the wild will of the waves?

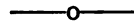
DRYAD.

We, too, have our fun and frolic,
As we rollick
In and out amongst the trees,
Twining wreaths of summer roses,
Pelting posies ;
Can you match such joys as these?





THE HERMIT'S CROWN.



THE noontide sun is blazing upon a tourney-field,
Kindling a thousand beacons, on casque, and spear, and
shield :
But there will be no jousting ; no gallant feats of arms :
The tourney will be bloodless, the weapons woman's charms.

The people love King Arban, and 'tis their fondest prayer,
That they may teach their children to love King Arban's heir :
But deaf to all entreaties, he leads a single life,
A people for his children, a kingdom for his wife.

At length the king has yielded—against his will, I ween,—
And promises his people that they shall have a queen ;
And heralds through the kingdom have published far and wide,
To-day their Lord King Arban will choose himself a bride.

The balconies are crowded with troops of laughing girls,
Whose bright eyes dim their jewels, whose bosoms pale their
 pearls ;
And ceaselessly they prattle, like sparrows on the eaves,
Or like a grove of poplars when light winds stir the leaves.

But hark ! a crash of trumpets, and every tongue is dumb !
A silent expectation succeeds the cheerful hum,
And maids arrange their jewels, and smooth their glossy hair,
As Arban comes amongst them with shouts that shake the air.

King Arban mounts the daïs, and, dazzled, shades his eyes,
Then shyly looks around him, and looks again and sighs ;
And, covered with confusion, he lifts aloud his voice,
And calls upon the Virgin to aid him in his choice.

The prayer was scarcely uttered, when, struggling through the
press,

An old man tottered feebly, clad in a hermit's dress,
Bearing with him a casket of precious jasper stone,
Which he laid down in silence before King Arban's throne.

King Arban took the casket, and raising up the lid,
A faded wreath discovered in silken tissues hid.
He smiled, and shouts of laughter up from the courtiers went,
And like an echo followed soft maiden merriment.

"Oh, mock not at my offering : the crown has magic powers,
For it can be refreshed, and bloom again with flowers.
Let but a maiden wear it, whose heart is pure and true,
These withered buds will open, these dry leaves live anew.

"But should one thought unholy within her bosom hide,
The stems will still as sapless, the leaves as sere abide.
Then take my wreath, King Arban, place it on each fair head,
And when you see the blossoms you need not fear to wed."

A blush stole o'er the maidens as from the sun at eve :
Some toss their heads, and others their places slyly leave ;
The eyes of some in sorrow upon the earth are bent,
And some look proudly round them—too proudly innocent.

The king then bade the heralds call each one by her name :
And first, high-born Olinda in her great beauty came.
They crowned her with the chaplet ; and when no change
they found
She tore it from her temples and dashed it on the ground.

Gertruda then was summoned, who, blushing, crowned her
head :
A leaf, a blossom freshened, and then again were dead.
And troops of lovely ladies submitted to the test
Till each had worn the chaplet, and humbled joined the rest.

“Good father ! Is it fated,” King Arban sadly cried,
“That I throughout my kingdom am not to find a bride ? ”
The Hermit he had vanished, but close where he had stood
The king espied a maiden in peasant cloak and hood.

"Come hither, pretty maiden ; pr'ythee, why tremblest thou ?
Who knows ? the wreath may blossom when placed upon thy
brow."

"She is a beggar's daughter," the haughty courtiers plead ;

"Look at her tattered raiment !" King Arban takes no heed.

And so they brought her blushing, all in her ragged gown,
And set upon her temples the Hermit's faded crown :
And straight the wreath was covered with leaves of burnished
green,
And fragrant buds and blossoms came peeping up between.

She stood a dream of beauty—her glorious golden hair
Rippling below her girdle—a dream of beauty rare.
And none knew which was fairest, the flowers upon the
wreath,
Or that pure face, all radiant, which sweetly blushed beneath.

King Arban kissed her forehead, and placed her by his side,
And bade the people honour his gentle queen and bride ;
And all the people shouted long life to their young queen,
And praised her wondrous beauty, and loved her modest mien.

They brought her robes of purple, and jewels rich and rare,
A crown with diamonds blazing—all that a queen should wear.
“Oh ! ask me not, King Arban ; oh ! ask me not,” she said,
“To wear another circlet than this upon my head.

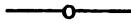
“Through it I gain thy favour, and it will prove to you
Whilst it is gay with blossoms that I am loyal and true ;
But should one leaflet wither, then know, beyond a doubt,
That I am all unworthy, and take and cast me out ! ”

He yielded to her fancy ; and ever year by year
The wreath more thickly blossomed, and she became more
dear,
And other buds expanded,—fair children came to bless
A father’s fond affection, a mother’s faithfulness.





ELDORADO.



" PARDON if my words are stinging,
For I know not what I say !
But 'tis hard to see you flinging
All our golden hopes away,
When I know by computation
That a few short leagues of sea
Part us from our destination !
Give me but three days to be
In Eldorado !

“ Ye refuse!—and ye are stronger,
I am, therefore, in your thrall.
Go! I call you friends no longer—
Cowards, dastards are ye all!
Saints in heaven! Can that be vapour
Looming in the distant blue?
No! 'tis land—shout, dance, and caper!
Shout and yell, 'tis land in view—
 'Tis Eldorado!”

All eyes turn with joyous wonder
Where their leader's fingers point,
And a shout like summer thunder
Shakes the ship in every joint.
To the sweeps they rush and labour,
Wild with mingled joy and shame;
And each urges on his neighbour
With the magic in the name
 Of Eldorado.

Like a battle-horse careering
Bounds the good ship through the spray,
And with morning light appearing
Steals into a quiet bay.
Poets' dream of fields Elysian,
Poets' dream of Paradise,
Ne'er surpassed that glorious vision—
That first view that met their eyes,
Of Eldorado.

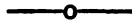
Nature on that lovely region
Casts her gifts with lavish hand,
Unknown birds—a dazzling legion—
Make a rainbow of the land;
And from tree to tree plants creeping,
Weave the forests into bowers:—
But the pestilence is sleeping,
Covered over with the flowers
Of Eldorado.

Long the rovers passed in seeking
Gold and gems, but they found none,
Over swamps with fever reeking,
Drenched with rain, and scorched by sun.
Found they nothing—no repayment
For their dangers on the wave ?
For their lack of food and raiment ?
Yes!—each rover found a grave
In Eldorado.





WHITE HEATHER.



JEANIE climbs the mountain-side,
She is all alone, is Jeanie ;
She has in the country wide
Lovers none, and friends not many.
She is poor, and all her wealth
Lies in features sweet and sunny,
And a spirit bright with health :—
Friends and lovers come to money.

“ He will never think of me,”

Jeanie sighs and thus confesses
That a love lurks silently
Hidden in her heart's recesses.

“ We have only left one cow,

Mother says that she must sell it.
This ill-luck which haunts us now,
His strong arm would soon dispel it.”

“ I have heard that heather white

Luck bestows upon the finder :
If I found some, fortune might
Prove perchance a little kinder.
It must now be in full flower
In this sunny August weather ;
Moor and mountain I will scour
Till I find the lucky heather.”

Jamie saw a flash of red
'Mongst the heather and bog-myrtle.
To himself young Jamie said,
" That is Jeanie Gordon's kirtle,
What can she be seeking there ? "
Round she looks, then clambers higher ;
Now she stops to tie her hair,
Now to tear away a briar.

" Jeanie's eyes are soft and true,
Jeanie's mouth is soft and smiling,
And I think that very few
Boast of beauty so beguiling.
It is strange with such a face
No one comes the lassie wooing,
I will follow her a-pace
Just to see what she is doing."

It was noontide when they met,
Ever since they have been roaming :
Now the grass and flowers are wet
With the dew which falls at gloaming.
Yet they do not seem to tire,
Down the hill they run together.
Jeanie has her heart's desire,
Jeanie has her branch of heather.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



